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TAGS: MARR PGOV PREL RO

SUBJECT: DEFENSE POLICY WORKING GROUP BILATERAL DISCUSSION

REF: BUCHAREST 1450

Classified By: Acting Deputy Chief of Mission Bryan W, Dalton for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: A bilateral working group organized by the Romanian MOD with DOD counterparts provided insights into Romanian views on their ongoing military transformation and bilateral military cooperation. Discussion topics included a review of bilateral cooperation, GWOT, and transformation of the Romanian armed forces. The working group discussions helped clarify MOD interests, and reflected both the strong and close relationship between the US and Romania as well as some future challenges. While generally enthusiastic about transformation, the Romanian military will increasingly make cost-benefit calculations, especially in light of the steep cost of present and future overseas commitments. Continuing political jockeying within the ruling alliance will also keep things at the MOD unsettled. End Summary.

#### Bilateral Cooperation

¶2. (C) At the September 7 working group sessions, Col Grosu, chief of the Romanian International Military Cooperation Directorate (IMCD) reviewed the main areas of US-Romanian cooperation, including, *inter alia*: FMF, IMET and the US-Romanian basing agreement. On FMF, Romania is working out the kinks in the delays for modernization of its C-130s -- an essential element in Romania's ability to conduct its own lift into theaters. Grosu mentioned concerns with C-130 repair cycles, insufficient spare parts inventory and need for a C-130 hanger. Romania would like additional HMMWVs, has identified a need for more heavily armored vehicles and is interested in more IMET courses for Romanian Special Forces. Grosu also briefed on the stages for making the SOCMAR Black Sea Integrated surveillance subsystems operational. On the IMET program, he noted that 923 Romanians have participated since 1991. The MOD likes the present format of courses, and would like to step up training for Special Forces, to include training in CT, civil-military cooperation and intelligence. Romania endorsed the C-17 strategic airlift capability initiative in August, and beginning in 2007, will make use of its 150 hours contract. Meanwhile the MOD has requested a budget increase to cover 50 additional hours of flying time. In conclusion, Grosu noted the excellent state of US-Romanian bilateral military cooperation, and the development of an intensified strategic partnership.

#### Romanian participation in International Operations/GWOT

¶3. (C) The IMCD's Sebastian Huluban updated the group on Romania's participation in Afghanistan and Iraq. Romania plans to deploy a reinforced company (177 soldiers) to the Afghan theater. The Romanian forces in MND-SE have been reallocated to Talil as part of the assumption of

operational command by Iraqi forces. Romania has agreed to a "soft security" approach as part of its Black Sea Area interests, which will focus on regional development, rule of law and multilateral issues such as transborder crime.

Priorities include building confidence and transparency among the Black Sea littoral states. For example, Romania and Turkey are discussing a memorandum of understanding on Romania's contribution to Operation Black Sea Harmony.

Other points: Romanian Forces in Afghanistan are expecting to receive Electronic Counter Measure (ECM) equipment and 20 HMMWVs to meet their operational requirements; and there was little formal coordination with the Dutch Military given the pending deployment of some 2000 Dutch personnel in Uruzgan Province, south of where the Romanian forces are currently operating.

#### Romanian Armed Forces Reform

¶4. (C) MOD is working on transformation of the Romanian military beyond territorial defense and towards expeditionary force mindset, in recognition of the current security environment. Specific requirements are to contribute to Romania's peacetime security, defend Romania and its allies, promote regional and global security and stability, and to provide support to local and national authorities in civil emergencies. Fundamental is for Romania to obtain the capabilities to respond to security challenges, including terrorism, WMD proliferation, destabilization resulting from failed or rogue states, transnational crime and competition for national resources. In terms of outcomes, the MOD seeks creation of a modern, fully professional, mobile, effective, flexible, deployable, sustainable force structure able to act jointly and participate in a broad scope of missions. Key to this transformation is interoperability. Regarding Romanian Special Forces, the Romanian MOD is supportive of the creation of a NATO SOF fusion cell at SHAPE to better integrate NATO SOF training, doctrine and operational deployment

¶5. (C) The MOD by 2015 would like to achieve a national defense structure within NATO's collective defense framework, which is compatible with both NATO and EU requirements. The transformation projects include: 1) meeting NATO commitments; 2) preparing for and participating in EU missions; 3) streamlining C2 structures; 4) streamlining logistical support structures; 5) setting the C4/2SR Systems; 6) modernizing MOD's Human Resources Management System; 7) improving "quality of life" for military personnel; 8) streamlining the Military Education System; 9) refining Planning, Programming and Budget Systems; 10) coordinating modernization of military equipment; 11) revamping military intelligence system; and 12) reshaping the Military Medical System.

¶6. (C) Comment: Romania's MOD knows it needs to operate in the twenty-first century environment through capacity building in niches where Romania has demonstrated talent such as Special Forces, intelligence, and multilateral operations.

However the Romanian Armed Forces are also struggling against aging equipment and institutional impediments, many of which are being addressed with the help of US training and assistance. It remains to be seen whether military transformation will become enmeshed in the ongoing political intrigues between President Basescu and Prime Minister Tariceanu. It is clear that personnel matters at the highest levels--including the suspension of Defense Minister Atanasiu (a close Tariceanu ally) and the tit-for-tat indictment and removal of Defense Chief General Badalan had a strong political dimension. That said, the quick replacement of General Badalan with Vice Admiral Marin demonstrates a commitment to continuity of operations. While prosecutors have exonerated Atanasiu for charges of "abuse of power" related to a domestic spying scandal, Basescu last week declared that he would wait the full constitutionally-mandated term (until the end of October) before making a decision on whether he would name a new Minister or reinstate Atanasiu. All indications point to a

new Defense Minister before the NATO Summit. End Comment.  
Taubman